

§ 794.107 “Establishment” distinguished.

The “enterprise” referred to in the section 7(b)(3) exemption is to be distinguished from an “establishment”. As used in the Act, the term “establishment”, which is not specially defined therein, refers to a “distinct physical place of business” rather than to “an entire business or enterprise” which may include several separate places of business. (See *Phillips v. Walling*, 324 U.S. 490; *Mitchell v. Bekins Van & Storage Co.*, 352 U.S. 1027; 95 Congressional Record 12505, 12579, 14877; H. Rept. No. 1453, 81st Cong., first session, p. 25.) It will be noted from the definition of “enterprise” in section 3(r), as set forth in § 794.106, that the activities of the enterprise may be “performed in one or more establishments,” and section 7(b)(3) specifies that the enterprises to which its exemption requirements are applicable will include “an enterprise with more than one bulk storage establishment.”

§ 794.108 Scope of enterprise must be known before exemption tests can be applied.

The scope of the “enterprise” as defined by section 3(r) of the Act must be ascertained before it is possible to apply the tests for exemption contained in section 7(b)(3) which are based on the dollar volume of sales of the “enterprise”. The activities included in the enterprise must be known, and any activities not a part of the enterprise must be excluded before the dollar volume of sales derived from the activities of the enterprise can be computed.

§ 794.109 Statutory basis for inclusion of activities in enterprise.

The “enterprise” for purposes of enterprise coverage under section 3(s) and the exemption provision in section 7(b)(3), is defined in section 3(r) (§ 794.106) in terms of the activities in which it is engaged. All the “related activities” which are “performed * * * by any person or persons for a common business purpose” are included if they are performed “either through unified operation or common control.” This is true even if they are performed by more than one person, or in more than

one establishment or by more than one corporate or other organizational unit. The definition specifically includes as a part of the enterprise, departments of an establishment operated through leasing arrangements. These statutory criteria are discussed in more detail in subsequent sections.

§ 794.110 Activities excluded from the enterprise by the statute.

The circumstances under which certain activities will be excluded from the “enterprise” referred to in the Act are made clear by the definition quoted in § 794.106. The definition distinguishes between the related activities performed through unified operation and common control for a common business purpose by the participants in the enterprise, and activities which are related to these activities but are performed for the enterprise by a bona fide independent contractor (for example, an independent accounting or auditing firm). The latter activities are expressly excluded from the “enterprise” as defined. In addition, the definition contains a proviso detailing certain circumstances under which a retail or service establishment under independent ownership will not lose its status as a separate and distinct enterprise by reason of certain franchise and other arrangements which it may enter into with others. This proviso, the effect of which is more fully explained in parts 776 and 779 of this chapter, may be important to wholesale or bulk distributors of petroleum products in determining whether the effect of particular arrangements which they may make with retailers of their products will be to include activities of the latter with their own activities in the same enterprise for purposes of the Act.

§ 794.111 General characteristics of the statutory enterprise.

As defined in the Act, the term “enterprise” is roughly descriptive of a business rather than of an establishment or of an employer although on occasion the three may coincide. The enterprise, however, is not necessarily co-extensive with the entire business activities of an employer. The enterprise may consist of a single establishment

which may be operated by one or more employers; or it may be composed of a number of establishments which may be operated by one or more employers. On the other hand, a single employer may operate more than one enterprise. The Act treats as separate enterprises different businesses which are unrelated to each other and lack any common business purpose, even if they are operated by the same employer.

“INDEPENDENTLY OWNED AND
CONTROLLED LOCAL ENTERPRISE”

§ 794.112 Only independent and local enterprises qualify for exemption.

The legislative history of the exemption (§ 794.101) shows that the proponents of an amendment to provide the relief which it grants from the overtime pay provisions of the Act were organizations of independent local merchants who did not as a rule engage extensively in interstate operations such as those typical of major oil companies, and who functioned primarily at the local level in distributing petroleum products at wholesale or in bulk. As a result the exemption provided by the Act, like that requested, was limited to enterprises which are “local” (§ 794.113) and are “independently owned and controlled” (§§ 794.114–794.118).

§ 794.113 The enterprise must be “local.”

It is clear from the language of section 7(b)(3) that the exemption which it provides is available to an enterprise only if it is a “local enterprise”. The other tests of exemption must also, of course be met. A “local” enterprise is not defined in the Act, and the word “local”, which appears in a different context elsewhere in the Act (see clause (2) of the last sentence of section 3(r) and sections 13(b)(7), 13(b)(11)), is likewise given no express definition. There is no fixed legal meaning of the term “local”; it is usually a flexible and comparative term whose meaning may vary in different contexts. As used here, certain guides are available from the context in which it is used, the legislative history surrounding adoption of section 7(b)(3), and the law of which it forms a part. A “local” enterprise

engaged in the wholesale or bulk distribution of petroleum products is clearly intended to embrace the kind of enterprise operated by the merchants who requested the amendment; that is, one which provides farmers, homeowners, country merchants, and others in its locality with petroleum products in bulk quantities or at wholesale. The language of section 7(b)(3) makes it clear also that the enterprise will not be regarded as other than “local” merely because it has more than one bulk storage establishment. On the other hand, the section makes it equally clear that ordinarily an enterprise which is not located within a single State is not a local enterprise of the kind to which the exemption will apply. This follows from the express requirement that more than 75 percent of the enterprise’s annual dollar volume of sales must be made “within the State in which such enterprise is located.” The legislative history provides further evidence of this intent. At the hearings before the Senate Labor Subcommittee a proponent of the amendment which eventually was enacted in somewhat different language (sec. 13(b)(10) of the Act which was repealed by the 1966 Amendments to the Act and replaced by section 7(b)(3)), stated with respect to the significance of the word “local”:

*** the language which we have suggested in the proposed amendment “locally owned and controlled establishments”, I admit that can point up some trouble and make some work for lawyers.

We, however, in our endeavor to show our sincerity of only trying to cover local intrastate establishments, went overboard on this language.

You will note that 75 percent of our business has to be performed in one State. I think that “locally owned and controlled establishments” language should better read “independently owned and controlled local enterprises or establishment.” (Sen. Hearings on amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act, 87th Cong., first session, p. 416.)

The same witness also quoted from the Congressional Record of August 18, 1960, the discussion in the course of the consideration of the amendments to the Act by the Senate during the 86th Congress, second session, as follows: